

she had deliberately planned the closing of her home in order to bring about this result.

Of course there was an engagement, but Mrs. Meade would not listen to any proposals for a hasty marriage.

Michael must go to Europe to complete her studies, and Rodney must wait patiently for her." "She asked, hesitantly: "love's transformation is great, but a man of five and thirty years who has lived for himself alone has much to undo, and to learn before he can be fully mated to a bright, inexperienced girl."

"Mrs. Meade's plot ended happily, so when Michael stood at the altar and gave her his and its hopes into the keeping of Rodney Smith, all witnesses felt that this time the marriage Cupid had made no mistake."

— *Western Messenger.*

Rodney Smith loved his ease better than anything else in the wide world. He had a competence which enabled him to gratify his every whim, to travel in a first-class manner or to stop at home in luxury and indulgence. It is needless to add that he had become selfish, and now at thirty-five was averse to seeing the dark side of any event pertaining to himself or anybody else. It was not strange a certain letter, which reached him when all winter was cold and cheerless, proved disturbing at first, then irritating. Forced to think and act, he touched the bell at his elbow—the summons brought his valet.

"John," said the master, "order the close carriage and have me meet the 2 o'clock train from Philadelphia. I will go myself."

The lackey bowed and withdrew. Two hours later the wealthy owner of "The Pines" and vast manufacturing interests in the adjacent city was packing the rail was platform, inwardly grunting:

"Just like my sister to thrust upon me without warning or my consent, the whole woman, I suppose, she has found trouble enough or too expensive to keep on her own hands. Of course I remember Tillie Greenfield—God knows I have occasion to do so! Did she not spurn my advances and marry another? I was but a boy at the time, but her refusal made me what I am. And now Mary sends me her orphaned daughter, with the cool injunction that, while doing my best for her comfort, I am not to fall in love with Mabel, as she has other views for her. Cool, upon my word! And her governess is to accompany the girl, and my house is to be invaded and turned into a young ladies' boarding-school without so much as 'By your leave!'"

A shriek of the whistle announced the coming of the train, and Rodney stood